



Recreation Department

PARK COMMISSIONERS

Shirley Canniff
Leslie Mayer
Jen Rothenberg
Phil Lasker
Scott Walker
Josh Fenollosa - Associate
Sarah Carrier- Associate

MEETING NOTICE

The Park and Recreation Commission
Tuesday, November 28, 2023
7:00 PM – Arlington Community Center (2nd Floor)

AGENDA

- 1) Park Permitting for Arlington Private Preschools
- 2) Public Arts Mural Conversation
- 3) Comments and Items for Future Meetings:
 - a) Permitting of alcohol events on property under Park Commission jurisdiction
- 4) Bench Donation Reservoir – Stephen Emsbo-Mattingly
- 5) Spy Pond Picnic Table Donation – Paul Harvey
- 6) Correspondence Received: N/A
- 7) Minute Approval – 10/24/2023 & 11/14/2023
- 8) New Business
- 9) Public Comment

Town of Arlington Park Permitting Requirements for Non-Town of Arlington Schools (Preschools)

The Arlington Park Commission does require schools that use park properties (field or playground) on a regular basis as part of their daily curriculum to obtain a permit through the Arlington Recreation Department. We do not require this for occasional use, but if your school uses a park or parks daily then it is required. Although this process was waived during the pandemic, it is back in place as a requirement. Please email Director of Recreation Joseph Connelly at jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us for more information or to obtain the field/park request form.

<board@rogerspierce.org>

Subject: Town Park Usage Policy

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Good morning Mr. Connelly and Select Board Members,

Please find attached a letter on behalf of the families attending the non-profit Rogers-Pierce Children's Center (RPCC) located at 75 Pleasant Street, Arlington.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

RPCC Board of Directors

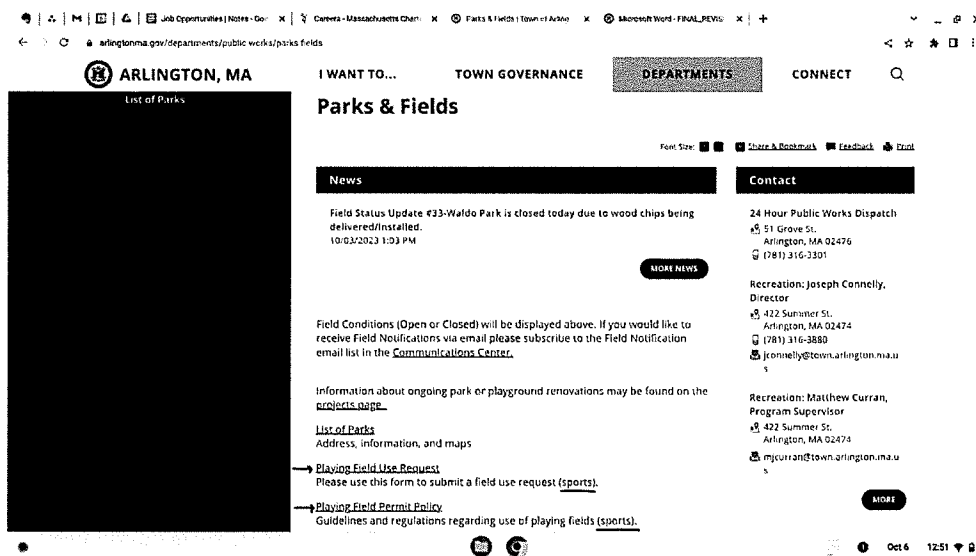
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Dear Mr. Connelly and distinguished members of the Arlington Select Board,

We are the parent board of Rogers Pierce Children's Center (RPCC), a **nonprofit** full-day, full-year childcare center serving children ages 15 months through 5 years. Founded in 1968, RPCC has been a part of the Arlington community for over 50 years.. We are writing on behalf of the center and on behalf of all the families whose children attend RPCC; the majority of whom are Arlington residents.

It has come to our attention that you intend to impose a \$25/hour fee for private childcare centers to use public fields and public playgrounds in the town of Arlington. The purpose of this letter is to respectfully request that you reconsider this policy.

- Our director, Robin Sagarin, was told that this policy existed prior to the pandemic, though it was unenforced during the COVID pandemic and is now set to be enforced again. Yet Robin, who has been the director of RPCC for over a decade, had never heard of such a policy nor ever previously been asked to comply. Likewise, the center had never needed to consider this as an added operating expense.
- The request form that you provided Robin and asked her to use (please see attached), does not mention childcare center usage of public parks, fields or playgrounds. Instead, the form is for a "field permit policy" regarding "field use requests (sports)." Please see this screenshot of the website for reference:



It's clear from reading the "field permit policy" that the policy deals with reserving, prioritizing, and paying for "sports field use" for local school sports leagues, recreational sports leagues, and specifically not childcare centers, utilizing Arlington public parks.

- You mentioned Leslie Ellis and Arlington Catholic as examples of schools who have been paying for use yet these are entirely different use cases. These are schools not childcare centers who are using playing fields for sports that have competing schedules with other schools and have large budgets. However, RPCC uses playgrounds for toddlers and young children for free play and fields when there are no competing uses.

- Imposing this policy on RPCC - and any childcare center - adds a significant expense to the overall operating budget. At the absolute lowest end, our estimate is that imposing this fee would cost RPCC an additional \$1,500/month, or \$18,000 per year and entail consolidating our classrooms for outdoor play and limiting it to shorter time intervals, which is not ideal for young children this age. This is a significant sum, the vast majority of which would end up being met by increasing tuition costs for our working parents and families, most of whom are (A) already paying for these services via taxes as Arlington residents, and (B) already paying some of the highest childcare costs in the country.
 - Your office is effectively levying an additional tax on a specific subset of Arlington residents who already pay for the cost of their children to attend childcare centers as well as local taxes that already cover the parks (and roads, and sidewalks, and libraries, etc.). If our daycares start relying more on use of the bike paths to get our young children outside to exercise, will we begin to be charged for the use of bike paths and sidewalks?
- Public Arlington Preschools do not have to pay to use fields or playgrounds yet, unlike public schools, those schools do not have the capacity to serve all Arlington residents who require childcare. These residents, who may not be able to afford to hire nannies, who likely have to work, and who have no other childcare options, rely on private childcare centers to fulfill their childcare needs. We are tax-paying families whose children should have equitable access to public parks and fields without being penalized with additional fees for sending our young ones to already expensive childcare centers.
 - What is the difference between a group of nannies regularly meeting at playgrounds versus a childcare center doing so that would justify the latter being forced to pay an additional fee?
 - The class size at RPCC is 10-12 kids supervised by 2-3 teachers
 - You can [learn more here](#) about the importance of equitable access to outdoor spaces.
- There will be additional and significant indirect costs to our center as a result of this policy. Here are just some of the ways in which this will impact our center if this policy is imposed:
 - Additional time for school administrators and teachers to plan and coordinate schedules and logistics to visit specific parks.
 - Additional time budgeting & accounting for additional direct costs into school budgets.
 - Additional time spent regularly advanced planning or tracking use in order to apply for permits and pay fees to your office.
 - Loss of spontaneity and flexibility for our young children due to being limited to certain permitted/paid for areas.
 - For example, if the weather forecast predicts rain, but instead it's a sunny day, the teachers would no longer be able to take the children to a local playground (because that wasn't already planned/budgeted for the given day), whereas currently teachers can do so with ease for the health and benefit of the children.
 - Playground and field visits are often spontaneously chosen based on weather, children's moods, group decision (teaching children how to participate in planning and work as a group to make decisions) interests that day.

- Less time spent outside due to what would become time-bound playground/field visits, which can also lead to decreased gross motor play while this country already faces a growing obesity epidemic. We need to make it easier to get our children outside and not charge to do so!
- When a childcare center - even one that has paid for use of a playground or field - is using said field, it is often alongside other childcare centers and/or residents. We have never requested exclusive use and enjoy these areas with all who care to share. With this policy, we would pay while others freely share the same space alongside us.
 - The larger private childcare centers in Arlington have their own playgrounds so this policy will not affect them as much. The policy penalizes smaller centers, such as RPCC and several others, that do not have playgrounds and rely on use of public parks.
- Early Childhood regulations for centers mandate that our children play outside daily. Part of learning growth and development involves interacting with different environments and exploring and experiencing a diversity in play and settings. We pay for all of this incredible enrichment post-tax out of pocket. To say that we have the option of Whittemore Robbins Park at no cost disregards the enrichment of our children and certainly degrades the quality of care that we provide for our children and families. Your policy puts an undue burden on the center and our families and diminishes the experience and growth opportunities our children have always happily enjoyed.

As a nonprofit, RPCC serves a diverse population of Arlington families without surplus - actually a deficit were it not for the limited extension of pandemic grants - and runs with the thought, care, and time of its incredible director, staff and volunteer parent board. Our center gets no financial support from the town, while paying rent to hold space in Arlington. Our director and teachers have been with the center for some of the longest tenures you will find in the field. We want to continue to provide this environment for our staff, our families and our children. This policy is yet one more challenging expense we should not have to bear. You can read more about our center and our history participating in and contributing to the richness of our collective Arlington community here.

We thank you for your time and consideration. We are happy to discuss this with you and any and all Arlington Select Board members. We are currently in conversation with other Arlington tax-paying families and centers who feel similarly and are exploring ways to participate in upcoming town board meetings in order to discuss this further, if necessary.

Sincerely,
Rogers Pierce Children's Center Volunteer Family Board

Dara Freedman-Weiss
Rachael Gerber
Gregory Martin
Lenny Paritsky

Stephanie Taylor
Allison Tocci
Curtis Wright

Re: Mural Planning

Cecily Miller <cecily.apa@gmail.com>

Wed 3/15/2023 11:15 AM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

11/14 May

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No one has nominated any locations in parks or playgrounds yet, so we do not have any under consideration. We did get a generic "parks and playgrounds" nomination. Someone mentioned to me building(s) at the reservoir -- I don't know if it is a snack place or changing rooms?

I recall you saying that the commissioners know the parks really well, so I was thinking they might have ideas.

I would love to work with the artist who paints basketball courts. She is a serious basketball player herself. What do you think of that concept? Do you have outdoor basketball courts that would be possible?

Are there any low retaining walls or freestanding walls that would be candidates?

I'd be happy to meet with you sometime (when the weather is better) if you wanted to scout locations, but I think it is worth running it by the parks commissioners to see what they think.

Best,
Cecily

Cecily Miller
Curator, Public Art and Community Engagement
Arlington Commission for Arts & Culture
www.ArtsArlington.org
617.331.1715

On Wed, Mar 15, 2023 at 10:48 AM Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us> wrote:
Is it possible to suggest a few locations the Commission could review?

Joseph Connelly, M.Ed.
Director of Recreation
Town of Arlington
781-316-3889
jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us

From: Cecily Miller <cecily.apa@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 15, 2023 10:42 AM

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To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

Subject: Mural Planning

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Hi Joe,

the Arts Commission has received a grant to develop a plan for commissioning murals in Arlington and to implement 1-3 murals; the grant is in collaboration with the Chamber of Commerce and the Arlington Center for the Arts. I'd like to invite you and the Parks and Recreation Commissioners to think about areas that might be appropriate for and benefit from a mural commission. These murals could be painted with community participation or by an artist working solo. Options could include pavement and retaining walls, even basketball courts! I've attached a few images that help consider options in addition to large walls.

I'd be happy to come to a meeting to discuss this further. This would be an opportunity to work together collaboratively on a project from the early stages.

An easy first step would be to distribute a link to our survey to your members along with the information in this email (including the photos). It's a quick survey that includes nomination of potential walls. But given the role and scope of the Parks & Rec Commission, I would suggest we meet -- maybe a subcommittee of interested folks, maybe the full meeting -- up to you all. That way we could brainstorm and get direct input, answer questions, etc.

Survey link: <https://tinyurl.com/AtownMuralSurvey>.

Thank you!

Cecily

Cecily Miller
Curator, Public Art and Community Engagement
Arlington Commission for Arts & Culture
www.ArtsArlington.org
617.331.1715





PARK and RECREATION COMMISSION
422 Summer Street
Arlington, Massachusetts 02474

Joseph Connelly
Director of Recreation

Phone 781-316-3880 Fax 781-641-5495

COMMISSIONERS

Jen Rothenberg

Leslie Mayer

Shirley Canniff

Phil Lasker

Scott Walker

Sara Carrier Scott Lever

GIFTS FOR PARKS FORM

Contact Name: Stephen Emsbo-Mattingly Date of Request: 8/17/2023
Organization: Citizen
Private or Non-Profit Group(501 c3): NA
Address: 19 Santa Rudge Ave Lexington MA 02420
Phone: Home 781 862 6351 Cell 781 264 7081
Email: semsbo mattingly@gmail.com

Intended Gift (please select one):

Park Bench

Picnic Table

Bike Rack

Planting/Tree

Bench
At inlet of
Monroe Brook
(over)

Donation Costs: (Actual equipment + installation fee + estimate of maintenance over 8 years)

Park Bench \$ 3000.00 (installation & maintenance for 8 years)

Picnic Table \$ 4000.00 (installation & maintenance for 8 years)

Bike Rack \$ 3000.00 (installation & maintenance for 8 years)

Park Requested: Arlington Reservoir

Recognition Plaque Text (see attached policy details for specifics):

In Loving Memory of Liam Mattingly
Dedicated to
Be You, Be Brave, Be Free

Signature

8/17/2023

Date

Res bench

Joseph Connelly <connelly.joseph@icloud.com>

Mon 11/20/2023 1:06 PM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

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SPY

PARK and RECREATION COMMISSION
422 Summer Street
Arlington, Massachusetts 02474

Joseph Connelly
Director of Recreation

Phone 781-316-3880 Fax 781-641-5495

COMMISSIONERS

Jen Rothenberg

Leslie Mayer

Shirley Canniff

Phil Lasker

Scott Walker

Sara Carrier Scott Lever

GIFTS FOR PARKS FORM

Contact Name: PAUL HARVEY Date of Request: 11/16/23

Organization: _____

Private or Non-Profit Group(501 c3):

Address: 65 MORRIS ST. BOSTON MA 02128

Phone: Home 617-417-4633 Cell _____

Email: pauleharvey@yahoo.com

Intended Gift (please select one):

Park Bench

Picnic Table

Bike Rack

Planting/Tree

Donation Costs: (Actual equipment + installation fee + estimate of maintenance over 8 years)

Park Bench \$ 3000.00 (installation & maintenance for 8 years)

Picnic Table \$ 4000.00 (installation & maintenance for 8 years)

Bike Rack \$ 3000.00 (installation & maintenance for 8 years)

Park Requested: _____

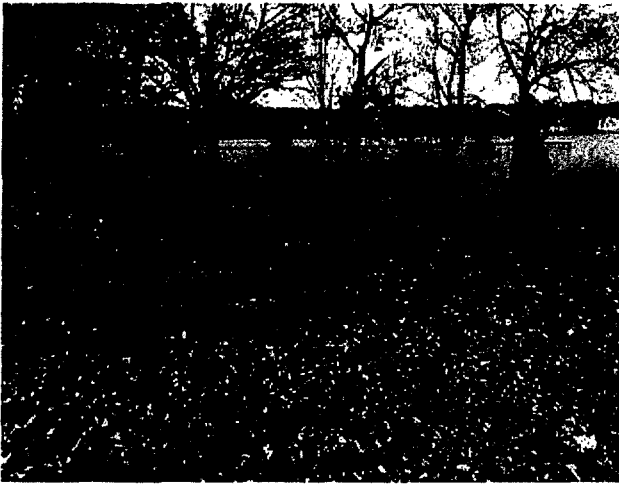
Recognition Plaque Text (see attached policy details for specifics):

DEDICATED TO FRANCIS GERTRUDE AND
REGINA AHERN OF WYMAN TERRACE BY THEIR
NEPHEW AND SON, PAUL HARVEY

Paul Harvey
Signature

11/16/23
Date

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Sent from my iPhone

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Spy

Joseph Connelly <connelly.joseph@icloud.com>

Sat 11/18/2023 12:01 PM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

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